

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace paragraph [0001] with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- The present invention generally relates to semiconductor processing, and more particularly to a method of fabricating isolation regions, such as shallow trench isolation (STI), in which the stress of the isolation region has ~~[[by]]~~been modulated by a nitrogen plasma treatment. The isolation regions created in the present invention, which are particularly useful in small width devices (on the order of about 0.25 μm or less), have substantially little or no bird beaks in the isolation region.--